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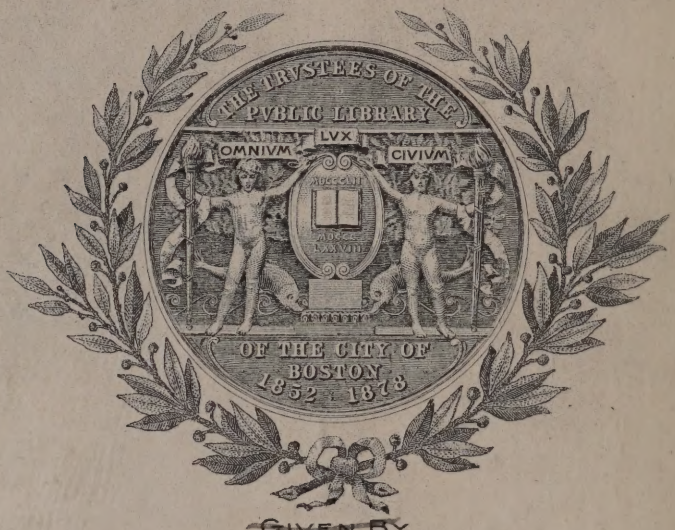

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A

PASTORAL LETTER

TO THE PEOPLE OF HIS CHARGE,

ON CERTAIN POINTS OF

Christian Doctrine, Worship, and Manners:

BY THE

Rt. Rev. BENJ. H. PADDOCK, D. D.,
Bishop of Massachusetts.

June, 1879.

BOSTON:
A. WILLIAMS & CO., CHURCH BOOKSTORE,
283 Washington Street.

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE AUTHOR.

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PASTORAL LETTER.

[NOT INTENDED FOR READING IN THE CHURCHES.]

My Brethren of the Clergy and Laity, Beloved in Christ:

The canon law of the Church whose ministers or members we are, by God's gracious goodness, declares that "it is deemed proper that, from time to time, the Bishop should address to the people of his Diocese, Pastoral Letters on some point of Christian doctrine, worship, or manners." Such Pastoral Letters have issued from time to time from some of the wisest and best of our Bishops. The ancient and honored Diocese of Maryland, in its recent Convention, respectfully requested its most learned and godly Head to "direct the attention of the clergy and laity of the Diocese in a Pastoral Letter, or any other way he may deem fit, to that portion of the Pastoral Letter of the House of Bishops in 1871," that spoke of Private Confession; "to urge upon them the duty of reverent attention to its counsels;" and "if he think proper, to admonish the clergy of his Diocese not to practise the things herein contained." I am constrained to believe that at this time, there are "points of Christian doctrine, worship, or manners," calling for such notice from me; and I therefore respectfully and affectionately address the members of the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made me overseer.

It may happen that one who bears his people on his heart continually — rejoicing if they grow in grace as well as in numbers, sorrowing if they fall into errors that imperil their faith and weaken the spiritual life, and praying for them always — may note several

and very different "points of Christian doctrine, worship, or manners," which he would gladly see otherwise. But it may be to greater edification if he confine himself to one or two which he judges more immediately pressing.

All intelligent Churchmen bless God for that magnificent revival of spiritual life, holy labors, churchly knowledge, and missionary zeal, in our mother Church of England, which has made the last thirty years glorious in the interests of Christianity. It is not wonderful, perhaps, but it is painful to see claims, influences, and practices which had small utterance or influence in inaugurating the new career, now arrogating nearly all the honor and merit; and under this prestige bringing in, year by year, new developments of doctrinal, disciplinary, and ritual extravagance and lawlessness, which, in the judgment of many of her truest and most churchly minds and hearts, argue treachery in a very few, disloyalty in others serving at her altars. No stretch of charity can cover the outrage wrought by the so-called "Order of Corporate Re-union," (in part composed of well-known names in the party arrogating to itself the name of "Catholic," ministers and members of the English Church,) in seeking and obtaining by stealth — perhaps from Latin or Oriental sources — what a member of the Order shamelessly calls "a *sine qua non* for such a Catholic and holy work" [union with Rome]; viz., "a valid Episcopal succession;" in re-baptizing hypothetically those already baptized in the Church of England; in administering secretly "the Seven Sacraments;" and in promoting generally Romish belief and observances. No godly wisdom can justify the existence of "the Society of the Holy Cross," which for the last twenty-five years has been unobservedly inculcating its methods of "deepening spiritual life," largely through the encouragement of "private Masses," the "Reservation of the Sacrament" for unlawful uses, the use of "Sacramental Confession," and of other doctrines and practices distinctly repudiated by the Church of which they are members. Nothing can justify its act of issuing, a few years ago, a Manual for the use of "Confessors," called "*The Priest in Absolution*," compiled from a French manual of the Roman Church, but drawn chiefly from the moral cesspools of Dens and Liguori; and so indecent, even after its purgation, as to awaken an outburst on the part of the English Church, parliament, and people, before which the Society resolved, "without intending to imply any condem-

nation" of the book, to "supply" no farther copies to priests engaged in that duty. "The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament" in the English Church, with Branches in the Scotch, Canadian, and American Churches, is laboring with all the strength that comes from organization, quietness, and freedom from outside control, to indoctrinate the Church by means of printed volumes and its monthly confidential requests for united prayer, with the duty and practice of the worship of Christ present on the altar under the form of bread and wine; of reservation of the Elements for unauthorized uses, of habitual private Confession and Absolution; of restoration of "the Sacrament of Unction," "the Sacrament of Confirmation," and of "the Last Sacraments;" and of "prayers for the repose of souls departed": every member being bounden "to make such special intercessions as shall be from time to time directed."

I mention these facts, dear Brethren of the Clergy and Laity, because from such sources and such agencies, naturally enough, but unhappily, certain kindred views and practices have gained more or less influence in the daughter Church, of which we are members. They have had earnest, devout, able men and women for their advocacy; and the use of devotional books, chiefly from English presses or authors, has been made an agency whose power few have measured. Not a few of the Church's children (to their praise be it said) appreciate holy living better than nice distinctions of doctrine; and hence, some have been led to become favorers of certain things in doctrine, discipline, and worship not accepted nor approved by that Church of which they probably mean to be loyal members. While, doubtless, a smaller number have been led on by their enthusiasm for their new faith and practice, until they have forgotten to inquire—possibly to care—whether these be according to the mind of "this Church," if they are only sure that they are according to "the general mind of the Church Catholic," or in accord with "Catholic instinct"—whatever of undefinable license these phrases may mean.

Of late, dear Brethren in Christ and the Church, it has been deeply impressed on my mind that this evil of erroneous and unauthorized teaching and practice is claiming such a voice of authority as to forbid further privacy on the part of him who, as a Bishop in the Church of God, has not only sworn conformity and obedience to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Protestant Episcopal

Church, but has also promised to be "ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away from the Church all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word, and both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to the same." Not that I have never before privately and affectionately called upon and encouraged those of its furtherers towards whom I have had official relations, to correct and abate such things. Not that I see any noteworthy growth and spread of such teaching and practice among the Churches committed to my charge. But because I have discovered that private effort and counsel have had but partial success, while forbearance has been misconstrued into absence of disapprobation by those who knew not the facts, as well as by some others; and because, by recent urgency from pulpit and chancel of novel teaching and practice as the mind and will of this Church, many Churchmen have been grieved and scandalized, and made to feel that the Church itself has been put on its trial before this community; and, finally, because able efforts have just now been made, by printed documents and otherwise, to disseminate such teaching and practice among Clergy and Laity in very many of the Parishes of this Diocese.

Acting in the conscious presence of Him who, I believe, called me to my great and trying office, and without thought of imputation of wrong motives, without disrespect of self-sacrifice and devotion, without respect for error because taught by men of godliness, without fear of any but God to whom I must answer, — I shall distinctly and affectionately warn the beloved Clergy and Laity of my Diocese against the acceptance or the furtherance of two especial views concerning doctrine and duty, and the resulting practices, which seem to me to involve peril to wholesome Christian believing and living. Compelled to state what has been taught and practised among us, that I may speak intelligible words of warning, I shall speak only of such "points of Christian doctrine, worship, or manners," as I have such personal knowledge of as, unhappily, leaves me no place for doubt or charitable uncertainty.

First, I have the painful task of speaking concerning errors touching the Holy Communion. There is a dangerous view of the Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist which naturally leads to dangerous as well as unauthorized observances and personal acts on the part of the minister and people. It has been taught by a very

few, but very resolutely (and especially by the agency of approved and commended books and Societies of English origin), that at the words of consecration in our Communion Service, "Jesus, God and Man, comes down now to the altars of His Church," so that the believer may say, "Thee, whom the shepherds and wise men worshipped in the manger, we worship and adore on this altar." "Nothing but the mighty words of Jesus, spoken by His Priests in the Consecration Prayer, can 'bring Christ down from above.'" But, after these, we may rightly worship "the Person of the Eternal Word through the elements our Lord takes up into Himself." Then invocations may be addressed to Him as One who "now deignest to bear with those that approach and touch Thee, and endurest all irreverences rather than withhold thy sacred Presence from our altars." Now the faithful may worship Him in the words, "I adore Thee, O Lord my God, whom I now behold veiled beneath these earthly forms. Prostrate I adore thy Majesty, &c." Now the worshipper may rightly utter the cry and prayer of faith, "It is the Lord! Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief! Lord Jesus, have mercy on me!" In the adoration of Him who "deigns to be worshipped and adored by us on our altars," we may even invoke parts of His Sacred Person, as, His Soul, His Body, His Blood, the Water that flowed from His Side, &c.

Because of such a Presence as this, it is commended to Christian people to attend upon this Service, although not purposing to "draw near with faith and take this Holy Sacrament," but intending only that presence without participation (called by the new phrase, "Spiritual Communion"), against which the early Church so vigorously protested. Attend this only "Divine Service," even though thus you are shut out from all others. This Service may rightly be called in this Church, "the Mass"; and says one (not now of this Diocese), "Hear Mass every Sunday and as often as possible during the week." "But," says he, "always offer the Mass when you attend it, with some special intention"; for — to return to our own commended authorities again — the intention may secure a great blessing to the one for whom the intention is made, although he may be afar off and ignorant of the solemn transaction. It may even direct the merit of the sacrifice across the abyss, to the soul in Paradise; and a solemn Requiem Celebration, under the direction of an English Society of Priests, has been held, it is alleged, in

another Diocese, for the repose of the soul of a saintly Presbyter of a distant city taken home to God.

Dear Brethren of the Clergy and Laity, is it not my duty to warn you against such erroneous and strange doctrines? No wonder that "the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament," their great promoter, whose members are to be found in some parishes unsuspected by their pastors, chooses the Festival of "*Corpus Christi*," for its annual meeting and celebration, — a day set apart by Pope Urban IV., in the year 1264, in especial commemoration of the corporal presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist; but cast out of the Church's calendar at the Reformation, and never heard of among Protestants since, until what the Pastoral Letter calls "the novelty in theology" clamored for a novel day of observance.

Out of such a view, unknown to many of you I trust, grows naturally the desire to "enrich" the "Divine Service" that is freighted with such honor and potency. There is indeed an innocent and laudable enrichment growing out of a richer reverence, spirituality, and fervor in the ministrants and worshippers, and adding the visible and felt "beauty of holiness" to the Church's abundant provisions for its manifestation. I see an increase of it in some quarters; I wish we had more of it. But when the ground is taken that because of the omission of the "ornaments' rubric" from the English Prayer Book, there is no law whatsoever in this Church on the subject of chancel orderings or dress of the clergy; that laymen in surplices may take ceremonial and conspicuous parts as "servers" within the chancel rails in the Office for the Holy Communion; that it is straining authority to object to a minister's introducing the "*Agnus Dei*" after the consecration prayer (as in the Roman canon of the Mass, and commended in the devotional books given to some of our people, as an act of worship of Christ now present on the altar); that no minister can be rightly confined to the Prayer Book, Psalms and Hymns, and the Hymnal only; that the reference (in the preface of the English Prayer Book) of things doubtful in ritual to the Bishop, has no sanction in the American Church; then assuredly the way is open and inviting for "enrichments" without measure or discretion. There is no longer any assurance of "Common Prayer," and room is at once found for all that our "heritage from the ages," our "Catholic instincts," or our individual conceit may suggest; room for manifold and gorgeous

vestments of mediæval pattern, complicated and extra-rubrical ceremonial, bowings, kneelings, crossings, kissing of the Altar and the Gospel, altar lights, lay-servers, wafer-bread, and all the ornaments and observances which sometimes make a Service very spectacular and impressive to some, perhaps, very painful to others, and not very strikingly suggestive to anybody of "conformity with the doctrines and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church."

As to all such modes of leading or following the simple but dignified and impressive Services of the Church, I perhaps owe it to my office to say to the people of my flock that, years ago, in every known notable divergence from "the Order for the Administration of the Holy Communion," and ever since on like occasions,—in all, very few,—I privately remonstrated with the dissentients, and affectionately entreated a loyal surrender of their private preferences to the Church's plain direction and long-established use. I frankly stated that it was not through ignorance or disrespect of the antiquity of the two lights, of the unleavened bread, of the mingled chalice; nor yet because of belief that these more primitive and other more mediæval customs above alluded to taught false doctrine, that I reached such judgment and gave such counsel. In matters of ceremonial *the Church*, not individual Bishops and Presbyters, has authority; here, as the great Hooker teaches the Puritans of three hundred years ago and all self-willed people since, private judgment has no place, and conscience no office, unless the rite or ceremony be adopted, or omitted, in antagonism with God's Word. I pleaded that it was because these "revivals of obsolete forms of Ritual" had no authority of canon or common law in this reformed Church, that they ought not to be brought in; that the justification of additions was the warrant for subtractions also, in the large realm of things not under written law; that most of them were adjudged illegal in our Mother Church, and certainly had no lawful standing-place in this independent branch of it. For, dear Brethren, it has ever seemed to me that to deny the right of a national Church to adopt different forms and usages in worship from those elsewhere in use, "provided the substance of the faith be kept entire," would be to refuse to her autonomy. To say that this Church has not intended to change, restrict, introduce, or abolish any rite, form, or practice, where she *has* "altered, abridged, enlarged, amended or otherwise disposed of" important matters of discipline and worship, is to

stultify her early Councils and labors, and to run against the facts of history. To say that, having so acted, an individual Bishop or Priest may restore, by word or act, what she has abolished, may replace in use forms which she has expunged; may read as unaltered rubrics which she has significantly altered; is to be wiser than one's Teacher, to refuse to hear the Church, and to elect disloyalty. While to say that some of her determined, deliberate, and *actual* changes in ritual, worship, and discipline must be interpreted as unintentional and ineffective because, forsooth, they do "depart from the Church of England" in what we think to be some "*essential point* of doctrine, discipline, or worship," is only to show that we think differently from this Church, and to endeavor to recover the Mother who gave us birth from the misfortune or fault of disagreeing with us in opinion.

Such a view would (and does) go farther; and thinks to justify the making of a national Church "a speckled bird" by the introduction of rites, garments, &c., credited to the Nicene, the Oriental, or the Mediæval Church, and in accord with "Catholic instinct," although this Protestant Episcopal Church, to which we have sworn conformity, has elected to omit them all. No wonder that to such reformers the most convenient rubric of all has suggested itself; viz., the lawfulness of any Catholic custom or practice "*not forbidden anywhere*" by this little fragment of the Church universal. When the Church comes to this consummation of wisdom, each year must add a volume to the catalogue of things which fertile fancies and stimulated indiscretion *may not do*, in their improvements upon the liturgy of the Christian ages.

As the result of my judgment and counsel I have had the happiness in all cases to receive assurances that such acts as were clearly against this Church's law, written and unmistakable, would be abandoned; and I think charity received no wound. But in respect of other ritual matters distinctly disapproved as not known to this Church's godly order, and causing scandal to many, I was not so happy in all cases. It was a grief to discover that the most ancient of ecclesiastical rules — well stated in the English Prayer Book — was obsolete with some who still believed in Episcopacy; viz., "for the resolution of all doubts concerning the manner how to understand, do, and execute the things contained in this Book; the parties that so doubt and diversely take anything, shall always resort to the

Bishop of the Diocese." Nor did its renewal, nine years ago, by General Convention seem more binding; when the Lower House resolved that "in all matters doubtful, reference should be made to the Ordinary, and no changes should be made against the godly counsel and judgment of the Bishop;" and the House of Bishops unanimously and affectionately expressed "its full trust" that it would "be carried out in the action of the Clergy and Laity." Having discovered the mistake of the Convention, and my own, all that I have felt it my duty to do since, in a matter not necessarily "of the principles of the doctrine of Christ" (for Ritual may hurt the Church more by absorbing its best thought and energies, and by worrying its truer life, than by any of its mediæval or even misleading spectacles), was to carry out unswervingly but kindly my then declared principle of official conduct; viz., never to give sanction by my official presence to observances and practices within my Diocese which could not seem to me "in conformity with the doctrine and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church," to which, at my several Ordinations, I solemnly engaged to conform.

But, dear Brethren of the Clergy and Laity, the *teachings* to which I have alluded are far graver matters. These must be matters of profound sorrow and anxiety to those whose allegiance admits of no two masters, and who regard the authority of the reformed Catholic Church, which gave them their Orders, as paramount to "the general mind of the Catholic Church," whatever that may mean. I have not thought it necessary to set forth theologically the precious truth of Christ's Presence in the Heavenly Feast, so that all who by faith become partakers of His broken Body and shed Blood become, therein and thereby, united to the living and divine Christ, to their great and endless comfort. I think myself not compelled to set before you the whole truth in order to exhibit the grievous error. But how venturesome on awful ground are they who render to our dear Lord "under the forms and veils" of Bread and Wine (which He never said were *Himself* — our Lord and our God — but only His broken Body and His shed Blood), a worship never divinely prescribed nor practised so far as Holy Scripture intimates, not found in the great Primitive Liturgies, never admitted into any Prayer-Book of the reformed Church. Dear Brethren of Christ's ministry, is this our Church's acknowledged understanding of the Ordination-vow "always so to minister the Doctrine and Sacraments,

and the Discipline of Christ, as *the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church hath received the same?*" I truly feel that my individual impression of the peril of so understanding it is of little value; but I cannot forget a very solemn and weighty expression of opinion which was read in every Church of ours in this land (unless the minister violated the canon), to the "congregation on some occasion of public worship;" and which you will find in the Pastoral Letter from the House of Bishops in the General Convention of 1871. This solemn utterance to the Church says concerning this very matter of the worship of Christ under the forms and veils of Bread and Wine: —

"That doctrine is emphatically *a novelty in theology*. What is known as Eucharistical Adoration is undoubtedly inculcated and encouraged by that ritual of posture lately introduced among us, which finds no warrant in our Office for the administration of the Holy Communion. Although men may, by unlawful reasoning on divine mysteries, argue themselves into an acceptance both of the practice and of the doctrine which it implies, these are most certainly unauthorized by Holy Scripture, entirely aside from the purposes for which the Holy Sacrament was instituted, and most dangerous in their tendencies. To argue that the spiritual presence of our dear Lord in the Holy Communion for the nurture of the faithful is such a presence as allows worship to Him thus and there present, is, to say the very least, to be wise above that which is written in God's Holy Word. For the objects of this Holy Sacrament as therein revealed are first, the memorial before God of the one sacrifice for sins forever; secondly, the strengthening and refreshing of the souls of the faithful. Moreover, no one can fail to see that it is impossible for the common mind to draw the line between the worship of such an undefined and mysterious presence and the awful error of adoring the elements themselves. Wherefore, if a teacher suggests this error by act or posture, he places himself in antagonism to the doctrine of this Church and the teachings of God's Word, and puts in peril the souls of men."

I speak with equal pain, but also faithfulness, of the other unauthorized teaching and practice whose recent enforcement from the pulpit upon Churchmen and strangers from many congregations, and whose commendation also by printed documents to Clergy and Laymen throughout the Diocese, makes my silence no longer charitable or allowable. I shall not — any more than in the former case — be beguiled into argument or controversy; but the faithful are entitled to know whether this new doctrine be of the Church or of men.

I would not willingly be misunderstood, and, therefore, let me define terms for a moment. Very much mischief has come to theology from that commonest of logical fallacies, the taking advantage of ambiguity of meaning in technical words under discussion. "*Confession*," and "*the Remitting and Retaining of Sins*," are such words. The Church which often uses Christ's own language in her conferring the Priesthood, may be presumed to believe in "the power of the keys," or the Priest's office in the remitting and retaining of sins; but it would seem equally plain that she does not find its chief exercise in that system of private absolution, which we are asked *to take for granted* is the controlling meaning of the phrase and the principal exercise of the power. For this the Church has no commendation, save in exceptional cases, and for these she has prescribed no form, save in the case of the "troubled" sick man, "heartily desiring it," and the "criminal condemned to death." Both the commendation and the personal form of absolution in the English office, are eliminated, intentionally, from American Prayer Books: so that to shrink from granting all that is now claimed for "the sacrament" of absolution or penance is not necessarily to refuse to hear Christ's words, "whose sins ye remit," &c., nor is it to withdraw the "power of the keys" from His ministers. Every theologian knows that, from the earliest antiquity, this power has been held by the Church as finding its intended exercise in the preaching of the saving or condemning Word, the admitting to and rejecting from the sacraments, the imposition or the removing of ecclesiastical censures (this last being an especial significancy in the early Church), as well as in the official declaring of the pardoning mercy of God to penitent sinners. For many ages, all known forms of absolution were general and precatory, like those in the American Prayer Book, not personal and judicial, like that which came into liturgical use in the twelfth century, viz., "I absolve thee," &c., and now prescribed in the English book for the solitary case of the distressed sick person. And yet the Church of all the ages believed in "the power of the keys" as fully as this American Church does.

Like ambiguity exists also in the word "Confession." Confession of sins to God is a duty which no Christian ever questioned, and the Church both helps us and commends us to it. Confession to men of the sins by which we have wronged them, and for which we should make restitution or satisfaction, is often a duty, and then is

the complement of the former act. A second sort of confession is that in which men "confess their faults one to another," not because the one has wronged the other, but in order that "they may be healed" of their wound. In this none ought to be better hearers, or advisers, or supplicators, than Christ's ministers; and, if faithful, wise, and godly, they will ever find blessed exercise of their ministry of reconciliation among souls "grieved and wearied with the burden of their sins," which are occasioning "scruples and doubtfulness," and are sometimes dangerous to the Christian life, and deadly in guilt and power. The Church, in special and exceptional cases, sends the sufferer to her minister, as to a physician of the soul. Both Prayer Books tell the faithful communicant to "search and examine his own conscience," evidently by himself, and point out "the way and means thereto," and thus he "may come holy and clean." "But, if there be any . . . who *cannot quiet* his own conscience," he may come to the minister and "open his grief," — the especial sin or question which gives him "scruple and doubtfulness," — and in such special cases the English Book proffers the unquiet soul "the benefit of absolution." So also the sick person is examined as to his repentance, charity, honesty, &c., but is (in the English Book, not ours) to be "moved to make a special confession of his sins" only "if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter," and heartily desire absolution. In the American Book, the "criminal under sentence of death" is exhorted "to a particular confession of the sin for which he is condemned," and the minister "shall instruct him what satisfaction ought to be made" to those whom his sin has injured, and that he ought to reveal existing "combinations in wickedness," if known to him. I recall no other illustrations of a commended private confession from either Prayer Book: the instances and characteristics of such commended confession are apparent.

Then there is a third sort of confession which is an essentially different thing from the other sorts, and which — with no offence intended — I can better define and illustrate from a chapter of the Council of Trent than from the Holy Scriptures or the Prayer Book. In this, confession means the private rehearsal in the ear of the Priest, in full and by enumeration, of all sins that can be remembered aided by the questioning of the confessor; and is made obligatory at least once a year, while commended to more frequent use. No

sin, however unknown save to God, however defiling in the rehearsing, can be concealed from the Priest. This confession is an essential part of "the sacrament of penance" (and hence called "sacramental confession"), the penance being given in the way of direction and satisfaction, and the desired absolution completing the solemn transaction. The Priest is the judge whether to remit or retain: if he remit, the soul is cleansed from all sin by his absolute judicial absolution, restored to its baptismal estate of pardon and privilege, and endowed with grace for future conflicts. This sort of confession, first formulated by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), was strengthened and enforced on all the faithful, under penalty of anathema, by the great Roman Council of Trent, during the English Reformation period. And this is what that Council calls, and what our Reformers, our homilies, and our great divines (like Hooker and many others quoted as in favor of "confession") fought against as "sacramental confession."

So far as I know, no Churchman has been found opposing the first two sorts of confession, while many have wished that there could be more of that coming to the minister of God's Word on the part of grieved, sin-sick, troubled souls; more spiritual wisdom and skill on the part of our Clergy to help them. And thus it comes to pass that many of our great divines, from the Reformers down, contending alike against Romanists and ultra-Protestants in defence of the lawful use of confession, are drawn upon in order to prove their admiration of another thing that takes the same name. But assuredly it ought to be remembered that a great Church, which has numbered many thousands of Clergy every year since the Reformation (now more than 20,000), and has produced the most voluminous body of theological literature ever brought forth by any three and a half centuries of the world's history, may furnish a *catena* of names showing varied utterances of opinion on almost any matter not of "the Faith," which, nevertheless, do not form *the Church's accepted doctrine* on those subjects. Quotations of individual opinions seeming to favor Calvinism, Zwinglianism, or Erastianism; or this or that view of Baptism and the Holy Communion, or of the Church and the ministry; are not generally allowed as proof of the Church's doctrine on those subjects. What this American Church holds on many points mooted of late is not to be deduced, it is hoped, from the holdings of divers essays, sermons, and pamphlets, that have "come

up into our houses" in great numbers, and will make excellent *catenæ*, on any side, for those who live a century hence. The Church's accepted teaching you will find in her creed, liturgy, and articles; and on some matters, even in her rubrics, as they speak through their significant changes, by way of omission, addition, alteration, or abolition. And it may be noted, that although some think it quite proven that nearly every great name since the Reformation is in favor of "sacramental confession;" nevertheless, by a happy inconsistency, if you please, the several Revisions of the Prayer Book have only tended to strengthen the Church's cautions against this very doctrine and practice. The Church will not —dare not— repudiate private confession, rightly understood. But she denies penance to be "a Sacrament of the Gospel;" she affirms it to have "grown of the corrupt following of the apostles." The Bishops of the Province of Canterbury were historically justified when, in 1874, they refused to grant a petition to license "confessors for the English Church," on the ground that this Church recognized no sacrament of penance, and, "as judged by her formularies, knew no such words as 'sacramental confession.'"

As a watchman and steward of the Lord, I have been forced to note, of late, that views and practices once unknown among us, connected with the nature, authority, and spiritual advantage of private confession, are now pressing for acceptance on the part of the Clergy and Laity of this Diocese, in such ways and by such agencies as forbid my silence. It cannot be done otherwise than with extreme sorrow, and perhaps at great cost; but, "with all faithful diligence," I shall warn my flock against these "erroneous and strange doctrines," and, "both privately and openly, call upon and encourage others to do the same," "the Lord being my helper."

As in my former statement, I shall speak with conscientious care, affirming only what I have personal knowledge of through long and laborious investigation, and also through acquaintance with the books commended by priestly authority and in habitual use among some of the people of my flock.

It has been said to all who may read that which the Priest has freely distributed, "Absolution gives remission of sins after Baptism. Seek, therefore, the application of Christ's cleansing blood to your soul in this His own appointed way. Go to one of His Priests, and confess to him your sins, lay all before him, as you

have laid them before God." In the form which the penitent uses on his knees, he is bidden to say, "For these, &c., I most humbly ask pardon of God; and of you, my father, I beg for penance, advice, and absolution." What is the significance of all this?

It has been held and taught among us that "Sacramental Confession," or "the Sacrament of Penance," or "Sacramental Absolution" (the three parts making a complete ordinance by whatever name called) is an institution of Christ and the Church for the conveyance of pardon and grace to him who has forfeited them by sins after Baptism. This personal absolution, after unreserved confession, differs greatly in value and power from the absolution in the public Services of the Church, and is pronounced generally, if not always, in the later form: "I absolve thee, &c." It is a Sacrament ordained by Christ himself (only not such as Baptism and the Lord's Supper); a means of grace and of fortifying the soul; an application of the cleansing blood of Christ to the individual soul, after the Priest has judged whether he shall remit or retain sins; and is the appointed and regular method of sealing the sinner's reconciliation with God, of giving him assurance thereof, and of restoring him to the fulness of his baptismal state of grace if he have lost it by sins after Baptism. And if he have not, it is of value; for confession and absolution are the special means ordained for the forgiveness of sins after Baptism, whether those sins work forfeiture of baptismal grace or not; and accepted contrition for sin does not supersede the use or value of a subsequent absolution. But this personal absolution necessitates a prior confession to the Priest of every sin that, after faithful self-examination, which may be wisely aided by written memoranda of sins, can be remembered; the Priest being bounden to help by questions, if need be, in the deep searching of the heart and life, and the seal of secrecy unto death religiously binding the confessor. Thoughts are to be confessed as well as deeds. I hope and trust that the English rule is not the American one; for, says the eminent President of the representative and powerful "*English Church Union*," "Confession discloses the most secret thoughts and acts of the penitent; and, as nothing however impure is concealed from the confessor," &c., &c., he needs such a manual as "The Priest in Absolution." Mr. Maconochie and other leaders use the same argument for the defence of the same volume. The absolution sought asks also of the Priest, penance and counsel

or direction; and he who seeks it is expected to be ready to do all that the Priest tells him, and to follow the advice given, unless he believes it evil. This system of confession is declared to be of such spiritual value as to be worthy of commendation to Christian people, as a privilege encouraged rather than discouraged by the Church, and wisely used by them from time to time, or habitually. Private confession may be wisely begun with children at seven years of age (the "Confraternity" books say six to six and a half), and continued by saints of ripest years. It is the wiser and more advantageous way of preparation for Baptism on the part of a penitent sinner, and is helpful in preparing to receive "the Sacrament of Confirmation." It is commended to those who would be especially well prepared for the Holy Communion, as on festival occasions. It is urged upon Christians who cannot "quiet their own consciences," and Christians who can quiet them are reminded that, probably, it is because "they are asleep" that they are so quiet. Churchmen are entreated, as they love God and the souls of their fellow-men, not to hinder any one from coming to confession. The argument of example is urged, — "the Clergy go to confession as well as the Laity," — and the Christian is led to believe that it is greatly useful to every one who longs for a "deeper spiritual life" to avail himself of its blessed light, comfort, and power.

Dear Brethren, Clergy and Laity of this pure branch of Christ's Church, I rehearse with humiliation this sad story, because not otherwise can I set before you the *reality* of this evil, and clear my conscience as a watchman and steward of the Lord in a sadly weighty office and charge. I believe that the mere rehearsal of such theories in contrast with "the simplicity that is in Christ," and His welcome and provision for sin-sick souls, is their best refutation. It certainly will seem to most of you, beloved in Christ, as if the Gospels, and the Epistles, and the writings of the Apostolical Fathers within the very memory of Apostles, and the Primitive Church (without vestige of known form or practice of private confession and absolution for two hundred years, and the Greek Church for four hundred, says Hooker), were argument enough for this present Church's ignorance—rubrical, liturgical, and canonical—of this extraordinary system. It will be hard to read quite all this between the lines of our honest Prayer-Book. It will seem to you, I trust, that the practice resulting from such a system is not so certainly that conformity

to the doctrine and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church, or so clearly a ministration of doctrine, sacraments, and discipline, as this Church hath received the same, as to commend it to many of our Clergy or Laity. It will, I hope, be deemed as good and final an argument now as when St. Paul first set up Church authority against "any man who seemed to be contentious" in the Corinthian Church: — "We have no such custom, neither the Churches of God."

But lest I should seem to other godly ministers and laymen among you, dear Brethren of the household of Christ, as I do to a few, making my private judgment a law for my devout Brethren, and my conscience their rule in things uncertain,—an act both weak and wicked,—and perhaps also not rightly informed as to what this Church holds, teaches, and commends; I may repeat what I have already said in private, entreating respectful consideration of what the Lambeth Conference of one hundred Bishops from every corner of the globe said, with one consent, last July. It was its utterance in reference to this system and practice now so defiantly pushed in the English Church by those who feel that all pastoral care is hopeless "working in the dark," as an advocate of it says, "until the rule of systematic confession is revived in our Church." I quote the language of the Lambeth Conference: —

"Having in view certain novel practices — teachings on the subject of confession, your Committee [all subjects being studied in Committees and their reports adopted] desire to affirm that in the matter of Confession the Churches of the Anglican Communion hold fast those principles which are set forth in the Holy Scriptures, which were professed by the Primitive Church, and which were reaffirmed at the English Reformation: and it is their deliberate opinion that no minister of the Church is authorized to require of those who may resort to him to open their grief, a particular or detailed enumeration of all their sins, or to require private confession previous to receiving the Holy Communion, or to enjoin or even encourage the practice of habitual confession to a Priest, or to teach that such practice of habitual confession, or the being subject to what has been termed the direction of a Priest, is a condition of attaining to the highest spiritual life."

And they add, as well they may, that in this protest against the "novel practices and teachings,"— "They are not to be understood as desiring to limit in any way the provision made in the Book of Common Prayer for the relief of troubled consciences."

Where this "voice of the living Church, speaking through its hundred Bishops, with one mind, and heart, and tongue" is not deemed of weight, I have asked attention to the solemn testimony of the House of Bishops in General Convention, as above mentioned. They say to all the flock in this land: —

"The teaching of the Church in this matter is plain and clear. She permits and offers to her children the opening of their griefs in private to some minister of God's Word. But she does not make this the first resort. She does not provide for its frequent recurrence or uniform practice; she does not impose it by ecclesiastical ordinance; she does not hold or declare it necessary for the forgiveness of sins, or the attainment of high degrees of spiritual advancement; nor does she connect with it blessings which can be secured only by its observance. She simply offers and commends this privilege to those of her children who cannot quiet their own consciences by self-examination, immediate confession to God, with faith in Christ, repentance and restitution. Therefore, to make this seeking of comfort and counsel not exceptional but customary, not free but enforced (if not by actual law at least by moral obligation and spiritual necessities), is to rob Christ's provision of its mercy, and to change it into an engine of oppression and a source of corruption. History demonstrates this. The experience of families and even of nations shows that the worst practical evils are inseparable from this great abuse. To pervert the godly counsel and advice which may quiet a disturbed conscience into the arbitrary direction which supplants the conscience, is to do away with that sense of moral responsibility under which every man 'shall give account of himself to God.'"

That solemn utterance, addressed by the Lambeth Conference in its Letter "to all the faithful in Christ Jesus, Greeting," — from which I quoted a little while ago — would seem likely to have weight with many of the faithful, unless the Conference can be shown unworthy of such consideration by reason of its men or methods, or the obscurity and uncertainty of its utterances. For English readers feeling such a necessity, Dr. Pusey has sufficiently disparaged the American Bishops' welcome and work in the meeting; and, in his tract with the frank title, "Habitual Confession not Discouraged by the Resolution Accepted by the Lambeth Conference," he has tried to make its utterance on Confession (all others being well enough) far from respectable. This makes easier, but perhaps not happier, the ungracious task undertaken for the Clergy and Laity of this Diocese by one of their number. Suggestions are offered concerning "the informality of the meeting at Lambeth"; "the brief period for which it was assembled"; (one month; longer

than any General Convention, save one, ever sat); "the lack of guarantees for the careful consideration, &c., &c."; the opinions "put forth without careful scrutiny"; the "irregularly introduced" resolution, "remodelled upon grave objections within a few hours," "hurriedly carried through," "differently interpreted by those who voted," — in proof of which an unnamed Bishop informed a Presbyter as to "what the majority of the Bishops intended to deprecate," and "another [unnamed] member of the Conference gathered from the explanations which he received that other Bishops meant, &c., &c." I refrain from comment. The record shows that the Committee on Subject VI. had had its attention called to "difficulties arising in the Church of England from the revival of obsolete forms of Ritual, and from erroneous teachings on the subject of Confession." On the former topic their report was unanimously adopted, as before quoted. The introduction of the latter was thought unwise by some — as by the Bishop of Albany — for reasons worthy of the consideration which they received; "but," adds the same Bishop, "it was carried with a remarkable unanimity, and justly regarded as a wise and gracious resolution of a vexed and difficult question." "This Church," says he in the same Address, "has prescribed the manner of its [Confession] use in a way that ought to prevent the false statement of some, that private confession is altogether disallowed among us; or the perversion of others, who, in spite of plain ecclesiastical prescription and purpose, are a law unto themselves." When the resolution was passed, after a full debate, but two Bishops voted against it; one of whom afterwards moved the adoption of the whole report, and it was adopted by the Conference without a single vote in the negative.

But then, when adopted, the report "means little or nothing," you are asked to remember: "The statement of 'deliberate opinion' really amounts to little more than the enunciation of certain truisms, some of them, however, expressed in language so ambiguous as, at first sight, to be misleading."

Dr. Pusey is quoted as saying that the solemn and affectionate utterance of the One Hundred in their Letter to all the Faithful, "is capable of different interpretations." Many of you, dear Brethren, now know this to be true. But all human and divine utterances are; and ever since Cardinal Newman taught his brethren that monstrous casuistry, how to put *the non-natural sense* on the

Thirty-nine Articles, in the interest of Roman doctrine, and aroused such a storm of indignation in the honest English mind as to unseat him in the Church, many canons, resolutions, pastoral letters, &c., have been found "capable of different interpretations." For instance: the "Homily of Common Prayer and Sacraments" offers proof that, while "in a general acceptation, the name of 'sacrament' may be attributed to anything whereby an holy thing is signified," — as with the ancients, "to oil, washing of feet, and such like," — yet "of sacraments of our Saviour Christ's institution, there be but two"; and, although others may have been styled sacraments loosely and inaccurately, "neither absolution nor any other sacrament else be such sacraments as Baptism and the Communion are." But "capable of, &c.," this is claimed as proof that this Church of which we are ministers or members, calls absolution, &c., "sacraments," only not such as Baptism. And this in spite of the stubborn fact that, a generation after the putting forth of the Homilies, the Church added to her "catechism to be learned by every person," a dogmatic definition of the Sacrament which leaves no place in her theology for any save the "two only." So also, under this "capability," it is held probable that the Bishops only discountenanced the efforts of Priests to "require," and "enjoin," or "to enforce confession by moral if not ecclesiastical obligation"; while we are assured they ought to have known that there are no Priests worth mentioning who do so. It is suggested that they intended to defend the right of him who resorted to a Priest *merely* to "open his grief," as against any hard requirement of a particular and detailed enumeration of all his sins, which no Priest has a right to require unless absolution be also desired; and "it is to be noted that in the whole resolution nothing is said about *absolution*. The Bishops may therefore be perhaps regarded as having in mind only applications for counsel and guidance, as distinct from a seeking of ministerial application and sealing of reconciliation and pardon." Besides there may be "a confession sufficiently full without that exact numbering or minute investigation of sins which seems to have been a chief objection on the part of several of the Reformers, &c." Other passages "seem to suggest that the idea which was uppermost in the minds of the Bishops was that of a system of arbitrary 'direction,'" which "would be a great evil"; but when they counsel against "the being subject to what has been termed

the direction of a Priest," they could not have ignored "the distinction between true and false direction," and must have warned against the latter only. Many readers might suppose that they understand the saying of the Bishops that "no minister of the Church is authorized to . . . even encourage the practice of habitual confession to a Priest"; but it is "capable of" meaning that the Church leaves it entirely to the judgment of the Priest and the penitent, they only noting that she says not one word "of discouragement of the practice," but rather encouraging it: she will not therefore clothe him with authority — "authorize" him — to speak for her, preferring to leave it an open question. It is suggested also that the resolution is "capable" of being interpreted into a godly effort of the Bishops to make confession a reality, not a sham; a spiritual exercise, not a form; for "a member of the Conference informed Dr. Pusey that what a majority of the Bishops intended to deprecate was a formal, habitual routine of confession, with little or no real penitence."

Alas! here is evidence enough that the resolution is "capable of different interpretations." Unhappy Bishops! honestly purposing to counsel their Churches in all parts of the world, they succeeded only in strengthening what they set out to discourage, and — whether through theological ignorance or literary incompetency does not appear — in uttering solemn counsels with an "uncertain sound," more ambiguous than Delphic oracles. Such an one as I — hardly competent, as I suppose, even to belittle it — could have no defence of such a Conference which could be noticeable or effective; but the eloquent Bishop of Albany has dared to say: "I felt that I must be more of a Bishop and more of a man from the baptism of the power of the Second Lambeth Conference; because in size, in spirit, in character, in representative extent, in loving brotherliness, in single-mindedness, in unity, in ability, in intellectuality, in spirituality, from beginning to end, it made me know as I never knew before, the meaning of the Creed's outburst of proud and joyful faith, ... 'I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.'" Dear Brethren, a Bishop in the Church of God may still hope that very many of you will respect, as well as heed, what I recently called "the most notable meeting of Bishops that has taken place since the English Reformation."

Brethren, beloved in the Lord, it would seem that the erroneous

views and unauthorized practices which these august bodies witness against, cannot largely prevail with the godly and self-sacrificing ministers of this Church, or with their devout people. Here and there, perhaps, the inalienable right, *adjudicated* by the highest courts, of every member of a Parish to have the Services of the Church performed according to the Prayer-Book of the Church, and its doctrine and discipline ministered as this Church hath received the same, may be forgotten; and then its wronged members' appeal to the Bishop will be counted an impertinence. Here and there, perhaps, the question may not be allowed to reach the court of conscience, because of the Bishop's supposed canonical incompetency to think, feel, judge, or admonish in such matters concerning Presbyters. It is said by good men, who would not willingly forget their Ordination vow to "reverently obey their Bishop, &c. . . . following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions, and submitting themselves to their godly judgments," that no such private and personal admonitions and judgments come into the purview of that promise. Not that the opinions and advice of the Bishop are necessarily ungodly, merely because distasteful to the admonished; nor yet because of a Bishop's little learning and great error, the admonished being judges; but ungodly because "a Bishop cannot give an admonition, which is one of the three sentences known to our canons, except as the mouthpiece of a court, and after a trial, or at least after a legal investigation, in concurrence with the Standing Committee."

I would not trouble you with such a matter were it not that on such and similar theories all private expressions of a Bishop's godly judgment, and all private efforts at godly admonition, may be respectfully, or vehemently, or indignantly declined and rejected; and thus the Church's theory and hope that under an Episcopal regimen not every error in doctrine, worship, or life must be bereft of the restraining counsel of a Father in God may be utterly balked; while every wrong thing must be at once hurried to the ecclesiastical court. I marvel greatly at the re-appearance here of the old fallacy of an ambiguous term. Because, after trial, a Bishop may be compelled to *pronounce a sentence of admonition*, directed by the court of Presbyters; therefore, it is supposed to follow that there is no other "admonition" possible to him; and the Church is supposed to identify in advance the "judgment" of *five presbyters*, and *their*

"sentence of admonition," with *the Bishop's* "godly judgments," and with *his* "godly admonitions."

It would seem as if such an opinion would hardly bear its own weight with men who read or think at all. The right and duty of *admonition* is so essential to Christ's ministry, that assuredly it never would find denial by Puritan or Papist, unless the denier had come to feel the inconvenience of it. My dear Brethren of the Laity, your Presbyter is bound by bonds far stronger than canons to the exercise of this duty, and you are to "know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." Hence the Church in Ordination exhorts the Priest to "teach and premonish," as well as to feed and provide for the Lord's family. At other times she bids him to remember his office, and if they be neglectful, "the people are to be admonished" as to their duty in reference to the Baptism of their children; yes, the Clergy "shall often admonish the people" in this matter. In their visitations from house to house, the sick are then "to be admonished" by their pastors, in reference to delicate and often distasteful, but very important duties. As Priests, charged by our Ordination vow to do what we can to "banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines," we are all bound "to use both public and private monitions." Certainly then the Priest must have a godly judgment, and also use monitions, even as to false doctrine, whether a Bishop may or not. He who has a "people committed to his cure and charge," must so exercise his office; but a Bishop, whose "charge and government over" other ministers, every Priest has solemnly recognized twice at least, and bound himself to respect, may form no judgment, and give no admonition, however privately and affectionately.

Perhaps, then, this essential to the ministerial Commission is taken away from the minister when he becomes a Bishop. Not so, however, suggests the Word of God. The great Apostle says to Timothy the Bishop, "Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." Again, as to the gravest error: "A heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject." Not so says the Church. The Bishops of the English Church have "admonished" the Church as to its present dangers and duties, pointing out the particular errors: the House of Bishops hesitates not to "admonish" both Clergy and Laity. Every Bishop has occasion, now and then, to

admonish some individual among his esteemed and beloved Clergy. The General Convention declares that "the godly counsel and judgment of the Bishop" should control ritual "in all matters doubtful;" while its canons contemplate the possible sufficiency of the Bishop's "godly judgment" to adjust difficulties as to the pastoral relation without reference to the Standing Committee, or to that longed-for boon of some in England and America, an ecclesiastical court. Even the Lambeth Conference unanimously affirmed that the "admonition of the Bishop of the Diocese" is expected to be given and ought to be heeded in the matter of unaccustomed ritual. That the Priesthood loses its right to admonish, in the Episcopate, the Church of the earlier day did not suppose. Every scholar knows the venerable antiquity of those canons of the primitive Church called "the Apostolical Canons;" and the thirty-first of these provides proper discipline for "any Presbyter despising his own Bishop," and otherwise misbehaving, "after a first, second and third admonition from the Bishop." The later Church had not yet learned it. No canonical provision for the trial of a Presbyter by a court of Presbyters was in being when the Mother Church of England, well knowing the rule since the days of the Apostles, required of the candidates seeking Priest's orders due regard and obedience to the godly judgment and admonition of the Bishop. No English Bishop to-day has power to put forth any such "godly judgment and admonition" whatsoever, if he may express only that "sentence of admonition" which is held by a few to be the only rightful exercise of the Episcopal office; and the English promise of submission is thus proved as void in law as it is in the "advanced" Churchman's practice. Probably many English Presbyters to-day would not consent to construe their Ordination vow as requiring glad submission to the admonitions and judgments of existing ecclesiastical courts, unless they themselves were out of England. No provisions by canon existed for a minister's trial and conviction when the Church in the United States required the same vow at Ordination, changing it only so as to make it read "your Bishop and other chief ministers, who, *according to the canons of this Church*, may have the charge and government over you;" in order, as Bishop White shows, to indicate, in the then changing relations of the Clergy toward the English Episcopate, Deans, and Archdeacons, *to whom* this obedience and submission should be

hereafter due. No foregoing trial and condemnation is contemplated by the fifty-fourth of the English "Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical," when the ordained minister, "refusing to conform himself to the laws, ordinances, and rites" of the Church, "shall be admonished by the Bishop of the Diocese," and if, within one month "after such admonition," he do not submit, his license shall be cancelled. No trial foreruns the act of the Bishop, who, by our canons, may "admonish" the misbehaving sojourner in his Diocese, and "forbid him to officiate." No trial precedes the offending minister's "admonition" for ritual observances which set forth erroneous doctrine, in the opinion of the Bishop and the Standing Committee; only after such admonition disregarded can come a trial. No Bishop visiting the Parish "to inspect the behavior of his Clergy," as he must by canon, is expected to go home and organize a court if, on inspection, he sees in their behavior something that calls for the utterance of his godly judgment and admonition to his respected but erring brother.

Surely this new theory of irresponsibility cannot be maintained in this Church until we become non-Episcopal. If it were sound, it would take from the Bishop every vestige of his office and function as a Father in God, and remit him to only the awful work of a judge pronouncing the sentence made up by a jury, or of a high-sheriff executing it. And if the judgment and admonition which a Priest promises to follow is only that which a Bishop can give after a Court of Presbyters has told him what "judgment" it would be godly for him to have, and what admonition he may utter, although they may be neither *his*, nor, in his opinion, *godly;* then, what if the court go farther than "admonition," and require "suspension," or even "degradation"? Is the Priest free from the promise of submission to lawful sentence because, forsooth, he pledged himself before God only in respect to "*admonition*," not "suspension" or "degradation"? Besides, what a refinement of cruelty such a theory lays on the Church, that is supposed to require of a man, at the moment of consummation of his pure and holy purpose in Ordination, to contemplate arrest for ecclesiastical or moral crime, and to promise that he will certainly bring "a glad mind and will" to the acceptance of whatever may be the ecclesiastical court's judgment, through its "mouthpiece," the Bishop.

No such theories can justify the present moral paralysis among some in the English Church and our own as to the old-time Ordination vow to "follow with a glad mind and will the Bishop's godly admonitions, and to submit oneself to his godly judgments." It is a hopeful sign that some who repudiate such exercises of Episcopal authority where ritual or practice is concerned, have asked in terms for the Bishop's "godly judgment" in the difficult and delicate cases so referred in the Canon on Divorce, and where the Presbyter may be relieved of all responsibility by laying it upon the Bishop. Every year sees not a few entangling, difficult questions (far more important than practices, and rites, and vestments *never held obligatory* but only optional by extremest men) referred by the Clergy to the Bishop for his godly judgment. The good sense and the necessities of the Church will insist on finding, or rather retaining, another meaning in the Bishop's required act than the legal one expressed, — not by the word "*admonitions*," but by "*sentence of admonition*." All writers on the Ordination service and Church law, who have occasion to speak of the matter, agree, so far as I know, in the recognition of the former function of the Episcopate. Dean Comber, of two hundred years ago, in his seven octavo volumes on the Prayer-Book; Archdeacon Sharpe; Bishop Mant; our own Bishop White; Bishop Wilberforce, in his admirable Ordination Lectures at Oxford; Dr. Francis Vinton, Professor of Canon Law in the General Theological Seminary, in his treatise on Canon Law; Chancellor Hoffman, the ablest canonist this American Church has produced; Sir R. Phillimore, late Dean of the Arches; and I know not how many more besides, agree as to the meaning and scope of this Ordination promise. All are aware, presumably, that the Bishop may err, as may the Presbyter; but the Church must lodge discretion somewhere: and recent events in England and in this country would indicate that, for a Church that would protect herself against the avowed attempts to "deprotestantize" her teaching and worship, a Bishop may be as safely trusted as some of his Clergy.

For, Brethren of the Clergy and Laity, one thing seems at last sadly but fully demonstrated: this Church has no voice which some of her commissioned officers find themselves able to respect when it speaks against them in matters not of *the faith*, but of teaching, worship, or religious discipline. The Bishop's wise judgment

and fatherly admonition — in England intrusive, in America uncanonical — is declined for conscience' sake. The ecclesiastical courts of the Mother Church cannot rightly be respected as interpreters of existing Church law, because they are "State made." The venerable Convocations speak with unanimous voice, on the same subjects, with no effect, because they are not "State made" in respect of legal power. The canons of General Convention not being "a law of doctrine," cannot affect the beliefs which a minister may hold, and also teach in all ways except by "bodily exercise;" much less can they trench upon "the liberties" of the people to perform conspicuously the very acts which the Church forbids the ideal "pattern to the flock" to perform at all. The House of Bishops "can make no law," much less think to burden the conscience of a true Churchman by its Pastoral Letters to the whole Church on what it supposes to be erroneous and dangerous doctrines and practices. And, last of all, the Lambeth Conference is — what it is, and more's the pity. It is difficult to think how the Church *can* speak effectually to some of her children, save in one or two ways. It may through a General Council of all Catholic Christendom, which we are assured they would listen to, and against whose coming some seem to be holding back their obedience. Or it may by the hints, whispers, suggestions, &c., of rubrical omissions and additions, "capable" Articles and Homilies, things "not forbidden," *catenæ* of extracts from the writings of Bishops and Presbyters during three and a half centuries, and such like voices; *provided* all these divers utterances are "in accordance with the general mind of the Catholic Church," and are consistent with "Catholic instincts."

Dear Brethren of the Clergy and Laity, it is not because I am greatly anxious about our future as a Church and Diocese that I have sought relief for my heart and conscience in this, in some sort, giving you an account of my stewardship, as towards things which have grieved and scandalized many of you; in warning you against errors now pressed upon you; and in exhorting you to stand fast in the faith as this Church hath received the same.

I have no doubt or fear as to the Church in this Commonwealth. I know whereof I affirm when I say that we have suffered in our good name and our influence, and souls have been kept from us by reason of some of our errors and infirmities. But the Lord has blessed us too greatly to allow us to distrust Him. Surely, if we

are honest and good men, we shall all see clearly, by and by, our several mistakes, and the good Lord will overrule our good intentions to His glory. Only let us be humble, teachable, patient, charitable, gentle towards all men, true, fearless. God help us all against self-sufficiency and self-will, against carelessness and indifference to our trust, against wrath and evil speaking. And we may presume that it is the Lord's will and purpose towards this Church and this people that we "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Faithfully and affectionately,
Your Bishop and Brother in Christ,

BENJ. H. PADDOCK,

Boston, June, 1879.